Hurricane Michael: Latest social catastrophe caused by capitalism

BY SETH GALINSKY

Hurricane Michael is one of the strongest storms to hit the Florida Panhandle in decades. The sustained winds reached 155 mph and the storm surge in places was 10 feet. But that doesn’t explain the unfolding social catastrophe there. Capitalist greed for profit above all, and the disdain of the bosses’ government at all levels for the well-being and safety of working people is the reason.

“Evacuate!” or “hunker down” is what government officials told people in the path of the storm. “Don’t expect the government to help take care of you,” Bay County authorities said. “You need to take care of yourselves.”

The only government-organized evacuation was by the Pentagon. It made sure that most of the 50 F-22 warplanes at Tyndall Air Force Base were flown to Ohio and Texas before the storm hit, and evacuated most soldiers and families.

Continued on page 7
In the North Caucasus that are part of the Federal District, where Ingushetia and neighboring Chechnya are located. Putin’s envoy to the North Caucasus, Alexander Novak, agreed to the deal in September, watched by thousands of Ingush in the capital of Magas, capital of Ingushetia, to oppose ceding of land to neighboring Chechnya by leader appointed by Vladimir Putin government in Moscow.
We need to organize unions

Continued from front page

represent everyone but they slavishly serve the interests of the wealthy,” Cal Hansen told nurse practitioner Siri Larsen on her porch. “We are talking with you and other workers today about the need to organize our own workers’ class party and to build a labor movement that campaigns to organize unions, fights for amnesty for immigrants in the U.S. to unify our class, fights against cop brutality, for women’s emancipation, and against Washington’s wars.”

“I agree, the Democrats are just as bad as the Republicans,” Larsen said.

Larsen was interested in Hansen’s comments about how workers need to build strong unions. She said she was a social worker before training to be a nurse, and had taken part in a successful union-organizing drive.

“When I became a nurse, we voted in the union and it changed everything — pay discrepancies, nurses not having a voice on conditions and staffing levels that were unsafe for patients,” she said. Management at one local hospital backed out of its promises to improve conditions and threatening staff, she said, then sold the hospital to another company.

“I joined a working-class party that fights to change that,” Hansen said.

“Some workers at the retail store where I work have been talking about the need for a union. Some of them live near here. Would you be interested in getting together and telling us about your experience organizing a union?”

“Sure, I’m all ears,” Hansen replied.

To learn more about the party she subscribed to the Militant and got three books on special offer — Are They Rich Because They’re Smart? and The Clin-tons’ Anti-Working-Class Record, by party leader Mary-Alice Waters. (See ad below.)

Before joining a picket line in Providence, Rhode Island, of striking school bus drivers, Hansen and other members of Teamsters Local 251 — SWP members from Albany, New York, knocked on doors in the Silver Lake neighborhood. First Student Inc., the bus owners, and local media had been trying to whip up sentiment against the strikers, who walked out after the bosses attacked their retirement funds.

Celeste Thomason, who operates an eight-child day care center in her home, told Ellen Brickley that she understood that bus drivers need a pension, but was concerned that the strike hurt the students who couldn’t get a ride to school.

“The bosses are trying to paint the unionists as irresponsible to cover up the attacks on their pensions,” Brickley said.

“I think the company is trying to chisel the workers and we should support their strike.”

Brickley said we need a stronger labor movement that can champion workers’ struggles, and we need for the labor movement to break from the bosses and their twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and form a labor party.

Brickley showed Thomason Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Barnes and paged through the book and its lively photo signatures, pointing out how Malcolm and others fighting against racist prejudice in the Army’s military education were transformed through their struggle. That can happen today if we fight, she said.

“I think you’re right,” Thomason said. “I remember a few years ago when day care operators fought for and won a union and health care. We took the kids to the protests and they learned about what we were fighting for.”

She bought the book and subscribed to the Militant. “Keep doing what you’re doing,” she told Brickley.

Harry D’Agostino, the SWP’s candidate for lieutenant governor in New York and a professional musician, had some free time in Seattle Oct. 8 while on tour with his band. He joined Edwin Fruit, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate there, door-knocking in the Central District neighborhood and met a home worker named John, who said he hails from the tobacco region of Tennessee.

“We had a discussion on what is happening to working people in this country and what our class will have to do to organize ourselves and build the working-class movement, one that can become capable of taking power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers,” Fruit wrote in a report on the team.

“In Cuba workers and farmers built a revolutionary movement and took power,” D’Agostino said. “They began to organize the country in their class interests and drew millions into the revolution. They succeeded in overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorship and brought workers and peasants to power.

“International solidarity became a cornerstone of what they did,” he added, describing how Cuba led in sending doctors to the Ebola epidemic in Africa.

John said he was in Haiti after the devastating earthquake happened in 2010 and was impressed with the work of the volunteer Cuban medical teams he saw there.

“You can imagine what could be done if the U.S. government mobilized its resources to send doctors to other countries?” John replied. “The world could be changed almost overnight!”

“That won’t happen under a capitalist government, where medicine is run as a business built around profits, not health care,” Fruit said. “But if we start building a workers party and the producer of the wealth — workers and farmers — take power, then that will happen.” John decided to try out the Militant and subscribed for 12 weeks.

As these accounts show, the party’s election campaigns and eight-week Militant, book and fund drive is helping strengthen the party’s central activity — engaging workers in cities, towns and rural areas.

If you want to help build the labor movement and think workers need their own party, join with the SWP in winning new Militant readers and contributors to the party. To get books and papers or to join with SWP members in door-knocking, please contact the nearest SWP branch listed on page 8.

Recommended reading

Food for thought—and action—from leaders of three generations of the revolutionary workers movement — Karl Marx, Leon Trotsky and Farrell Dobbs. Invincible for workers relearning today what a strike is, how it can be fought and won, and are interested in ideas about how the entire system of capitalist exploitation can be ended.

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Campaigning door to door in Woodhaven, Queens, in New York Oct. 14, Socialist Workers Party member Willie Cotton, right, speaks with an airport worker who had been involved in organizing a union at his workplace. He purchased The Clin-tons’ Anti-Working-Class Record, a Militant subscription, and said he wanted to talk more about unions and the party’s activities.
Brexit fight unfolds as capitalist competition tears away at EU

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — It has been two and a half years since a referendum on the U.K.'s membership in the European Union recorded a 17.4 million to 16.1 million majority for Brexit. Millions of workers took advantage of the ballot to register a protest against how the bosses and their victorious successors have made them pay for the crisis of British capitalism.

The backdrop was the sharpening competition between capitalist rulers worldwide, which is tearing apart the fabric of the European “Union.” The proportioned rulers in the U.K. are fighting over how to protect their interests and find a place in this world in the face of their accelerated decline.

U.K. Prime Minister Theresa May has been forced to resign — Brexit in name only. Though London’s offer would commit the government to pay billions of pounds into EU coffers for years, each proposal they’ve made has been rejected by EU negotiators under instruction from Berlin and Paris.

May submitted a package of proposals to the European Union summit in Salzburg, Austria, Sept. 19-20. The package provided for continued customs-free trade in goods and committed the U.K. to “continued harmonization with the EU.” It would end the automatic right of workers in EU member states to enter and work in the U.K. and would also allow London to pursue other trade deals. “It’s not so easy to leave the EU, it’s not without a cost,” said French President Emmanuel Macron, explaining the summit decision to reject the package.

The proposal had already split May’s cabinet. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and Treasury Secretary Philip Hammond, as well as May as Conservative Party leader, were one of four ministers to resign. He said her course wasn’t a realistic alternative, describing it as an “out- dum, a “people’s vote,” in an effort to overturn the previous “people’s vote.”

“…they want us to vote over and over until we vote the way they want,” Colin Johnson, a retired engineer working in Harlow, Essex, told the Militant when members of the Communist League knocked on his door.

EU bloc being pulled apart

The protectionist bloc that is the EU is being pulled apart as national member governments extend the interests of their respective ruling families. Recognizing the centrifugal forces, Paris proposes the EU implement a “multispeed” Europe of “concentric circles” to entrench a stronger position for France. A core of more powerful states that share the euro as their currency would form the center, locked together with a common budget, finance minister and parliament. The U.K. would be exiled to an outer zone, along with Moldova, Ukraine, Russia and Turkey, all of which are, or will be, outside the EU and use their own currency.

Macron’s proposals are anathema to governments in Italy, Hungary and elsewhere that would face greater competition and pressure from anything that smacks of further integration. Berlin is also “diamentically opposed” — for different reasons. Looking to safeguard Germany’s domination of the whole 27-country bloc, Chancellor Angela Merkel has no interest in reichtiguing the German capitalist rulers’ “center.”

When a German says “banking union,” he means having German accountants lay down the law to banks in Greece. Christian Caudron, inspector in the Weekly Standard in August, Greek workers and farmers have paid a steep price for this kind of “union.” The country’s economy has shrunk by 25 percent, pensions and benefits were slashed, and youth unemployment stands at 44 percent. Meanwhile, Greek government debt has increased by over 40 percent since 2009 with German banks coming in to write- off their loans.

Washington and Moscow

Washington and Moscow are adding to the pressures. U.S. President Donald Trump has called into question both the EU and NATO, pointing to how the European capitalist rulers survive and enrich themselves by relying on the Pentagon as their army. This allows them to go after Washington — and each other — to jockey for trade and profits without having to pay for defense.

Merkel responds that Europe must “take its destiny into its own hands,” But Germany’s armed forces are in a pathetic state. And there is no common foreign policy among rival EU governments — each jealously guards its national veto.

The German capitalists are heavily dependent on Russian gas for power and are committed to the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project that is under construction. But in July, after the White House flexed its imminent economic muscles, President Trump and EU President Jean-Claude Juncker announced a trade agreement in which Europe would increase purchases of U.S. liquid natural gas.

In addition to being a blow to the German rulers, this caused a strong reaction from Macron, who cares most about defending French agribusiness from U.S. competition. This doesn’t mean he seeks to protect French farmers. The profits are raked in by giant French commercial trusts that monopolize trade and banking.

Every move in one direction sharpens the EU divisions in another. The fact is there is no “Europe” in anything other than a geographical sense. The competition and differentiation there, part of the inevitable workings of capitalism, continue to tear it apart.

PATHFINDER PRESS

Thousands march for right to abortion in Ireland

“We voted to repeal the 8th, now it’s time to legislate!” chanted thousands of women’s rights to choose abortion at a July 29 march in Dublin, pointing to the victory for women and all working people scored in May when a large majority voted to repeal the Eighth Amendment to the Irish Constitution that had enshrined “the right to life of the unborn” and prevented women’s access to abortion.

Legislation to make abortion legal has been drawn up by the government, but has yet to be passed through parliament or medical services put in place.

“This has never been a quiet revolution,” organizers told participants in the protest. “Don’t get quiet now!”

On Oct. 4 Health Minister Simon Harris introduced for the first time the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Bill in the Irish parliament. The bill provides for abortion on request up to 12 weeks, but institute a three-day waiting period before the procedure can be carried out. The bill provides a clause that medical personnel can use a “conscientious objection” to refuse to carry out abortion services, but obliges them to make referrals to those who will. Some politicians and the Catholic Church are, a “people’s vote,” in an effort to overturn the previous “people’s vote.”

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ON THE PICKET LINE—

This column gives a voice to those engaged in labor battles and building solidarity today. Send in articles, photos and letters on picket lines and other labor actions to the Militant at militante@aol.com, post them directly on our website, or mail them to 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

UK Uber drivers strike 24 hours over pay, right to join union

LONDON — Hundreds of angry drivers chanted “Shame on Uber” as they marched around the Aldgate office of Uber U.K. on Oct. 9. Noisy drumbeats accompanied the chanting.

The action marked the beginning of a 24-hour strike by Uber drivers in London and Newport, Wales. “Uber is driving us into poverty” and “Uber end sweetened labour law” were among the many banners and signs drivers carried. Action was organized by the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain and its driver branch, United Private Hire Drivers.

Drivers logged out from the Uber app for the strike and asked potential riders to abstain from using Uber then.

The workers are fighting for a 10 percent reduction in the commission paid by Uber drivers to 20 percent for UberX. A central demand is that Uber implement the Employment and Employment Appeal Tribunal rulings that drivers be treated as workers, with payment of at least minimum wage, for holidays and the right to a union.

This protest followed actions in September by Uber Eats couriers, who deliver food by bike and scooter. Like Uber drivers, Uber Eats workers have an app on their smartphone where they get their jobs. Uber uses this to claim its workers are “independent contractors,” despite the ruling of the appeal tribunal.

If you are a driver, a bandleader or union organizer, they turn the app off and you’re out of a job. This helps them keep pay down and a union out. Even so, Uber drivers and couriers have been organizing strikes and protests, not only in the U.K. but in Australia, New Zealand, Spain, and the U.S.

The Independent Workers Union has called for a demonstration Oct. 30, which is the first day of the hearing in Uber bosses’ moves to overturn the Employment Appeal Tribunal ruling. The ruling was handed down two years ago, but Uber continues to re-fuse to recognize the drivers as workers with rights.

— Dag Tahir

Striking Rhode Island bus drivers win union pension

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — After 11 days on strike, members of Teamsters Local 251 voted Oct. 13 to ratify a new contract with First Student Inc., winning a union pension plan. This corresponded met several dozen of the striking school bus drivers, some of the 200 members of the union, as they picketed outside the city’s main school bus barn here the day before the vote. Workers were demanding a union pension because the company had violated their contract by failing to pay into their 401(k) retirement fund.

First Student Inc., an international company that contracts with school districts to provide student transportation, is the largest school bus company in North America.

“A lot of the drivers have to work a second job to make ends meet,” Debbie, a driver for 25 years, who asked that her last name not be used, told the Militant. “In addition to the strike in Rhode Island, bus drivers employed by First Student have walked out over the last couple of years in Seattle, Southern California, Montreal and other areas, seeking wage increases and improved health benefits and working conditions.”

After Providence bus drivers walked off the job Sept. 27, city officials and the local press attempted to smear the strikers, seeking to convince parents and students to oppose the walkout.

Many passing motorists honked in support of the pickets. A few expressed opposition. Driver Hans Jimenez said that after the company fired a driver six months ago, “we started talking about what to do, how to fight for higher wages, better health care and a good retirement plan. They make millions of dollars and they don’t care about us. That’s why we need to keep fighting.”

— Sam Handlin

Ky concrete workers strike over health care, two-tier

November 1, 1993

Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, recognized the first of more than 1,100 farm families in the state and identified close to a quarter as being in severe financial condition. One of the “luxuries” to go is health insurance. Currently around 25 percent of Midwest farmers have little or no health insurance. The average farm family of four pays down close to $4,500 a year for health care.

The July floods mean that Iowa farm- ers face the lowest crop yields in 30 years. The only way out for many farmers is to destroy thousands of acres of crops to qualify for the government’s “zero-92” program, under which 92 percent of crop value, is paid if destroyed by the government if no crops are planted or if an existing crop is intentionally destroyed.

November 1, 1968

The presidential election campaign of the Socialist Workers Party, backed by local campaigns, has been the most effective waged by the party since it first fielded a presidential ticket in 1948. And if there was ever an election year when a meaningful socialist alternative to the capitalist politicians was needed, this certainly has been it.

Referring to Huebner, Nixon and Wallace, an Oct. 24 New York Times story was headlined: “The Candidates and Foreign Affairs: Little Choice for Voters 600 to $1,000 per year.”

“They’re trying to do to us what they did six years ago,” said Jonathan James, a driver at Allied for 27 years. When the company “threatened our jobs with bankruptcy claims and forced us to accept serious concessions, they said they had to, to ‘keep the company alive.’”

Profits are booming today and the company has just completed a $2.1 million plant expansion. “This time they’re trying to get us to go for more concessions by preaching that we’re all a family,” said James.

Strikers and supporters have mounted spirited daily picket, shouting and chant- ing over bullhorns. They’ve greeted with a constant stream of passing trucks and cars blasting their horns in support. Production has ground to a standstill.

Other unions have joined the line in solidarity, including United Auto Work- ers from nearby plants and United Food and Commercial Workers members, who pushed back the bosses’ two-tier demands at the Four Roses distillery last month. “They’re trying to push the same two-tier system here,” Kevin Bradshaw, a 20-year driver at Allied Ready Mix, said when he met nine UFCW members from Four Roses on the line and looked at the Militant’s coverage of their strike.

Workers at retail stores in the area that don’t yet have union backing, coming from Menards and Walmart, have joined the picketing. One forklift operator and de- livery coordinator from a Menards store in nearby Jeffersonville, Indiana, came to support the strike on her day off. She grabbed the bullhorn and helped lead some chants. She said that the health insurance at Menards is so bad that she has to stay on her parents’ insurance. “I would like a union at Menards, we defi- nitely need it,” she added.

“The bosses called the police on us yesterday, accusing one of our guys of throwing a bomb onto the highway,” Ronnie Sadler, a mechanic, told us. “The police couldn’t make the frame-him-up stick because he wasn’t anywhere near the highway. We was walking the line with us.”

“One firefighter told us later that it turned out to be just a truck that had blown a tire,” Sadler said. “But today they’ve got the police here to escort scab workers out.”

“The company likes to talk a lot about how you’ll be joining a ‘family’ when they hire you,” Randall Carwell, another driver, said. “I’ve never seen a family separated by a fence. On the picket line side of the fence, we are the family.”

Striking driver Kevin Bradshaw said the strike sets an example for other workers. “This strike is an example of how workers can stand up for them- selves,” he said. “Even if you don’t have a union yet you can look to this and see what standing up for yourself can do.”

— Sam Hamlin

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

October 30, 1943

With thousands of rank and file coal miners again on strike against the wage-freezing policies of the Roosevelt war government, the War Labor Board re- jected the second agreement negotiated between the Illinois Coal Operators As- sociation and the United Mine Workers Union. As the miners battle to defend their standard of living, demands are growing for a general strike among the 1,450,000 railroad workers.

The crisis of railway labor can be bet- ter understood when it is recalled that the rail workers are accounted as one of the most conservative sections of the trade union movement. Today, however, the rank and file of the rail unions are fighting mad. They are demanding ac- tion and are proceeding to build some real hot fires underneath the ample pos- teriors of their “labour executives.”

— The Militant/Dag Tirsén

Uber workers in London march around company office Oct. 9 during 24-hour strike, demand- ing drivers be treated as workers, not contractors, with improved pay and right to join a union.

The Militant October 29, 2018 5
Pathfinder books spark lively discussion at Malinna book fair

By Janet Roth

MALINNA, Philippines — There was a sense of excitement when the Pathfinder booth at the Sept. 12-16 Malinna International Book Fair wasn’t packed with a crowd of eager fairgoers of all ages browsing the shelves with an interest. The calm was not long-lived. The crowds kept coming even after the usual crowd of a few hundred people started disbanding around Sept. 15. The center of the deadly typhoon hit farther north, killing over 300 and leaving a social catastrophe of thousands of homes.

This was the first day of nearly 30 years that New York-based Pathfinder Press participated in this fair. Its books are written by revolutionary leaders of those periods and published by Pathfinder, who is press participating in this fair. Its books are written by revolutionary leaders of those periods and published by Pathfinder, who is press.

Volunteer workers staffing the booth came from Communist Leagues in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the Socialist Workers Party in the Philippines. They participated with an address to both social and political struggles here and abroad, as well as an understanding of the importance of Pathfinder books to join the moral political discussions.

These discussions took up the important international shifts occurring in the world, including the US-China conflict, post-War II imperialist world order and the implications of that for the Philippines. They discussedory the responses by the Philippine government to the International Criminal Court’s decision to file war crimes charges against President Rodrigo Duterte. They also took up the rise of fascism around the world.

Pathfinder Press has been part of the fair. Most popular are books by leaders of the revolution in Cuba, the international communist movement, the struggle of the working class and the people who produced them. Pathfinder books spark lively discussion at Malinna book fair.

Continued from front page

Many working people in the Panhandle — where workers’ wages are among the lowest in the US — were surprised to hear the news. That’s because most people of the province President Rodrigo Duterte. This marked the 40th anniversary of Marcos, who had been a president of the Philippines before the first place. Many were outraged by the news.

Marcos was asked by a reporter “Why did you make me a president in the future?” He responded that “I’m not going to be a president in the future.” The question was one of those who came by the booth several times, interacted with the staff and left a lasting impression on the booth staff.

The booth staff was surprised to see a booth at the fair with 40 copies purchased. It was followed closely by another booth that they’re SMART Because They’re SMART by SWP National Secretary Jeanette Yar, with 20 sold. That title would have been enough to make a best-seller of the list.

Continued on page 9

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Continued on page 9
Korea denuclearization talks in interests of working people

BY SETH GALINSKY

President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un announced they are planning a second summit meeting soon, marking progress in reaching agreement on a formal end to decades of Washington’s hostility to the North and denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The first summit was in Singapore in June. The removal of nuclear weapons of all origins from Korea and the surrounding skies and seas would be celebrated by working people in Korea and around the world.

Trump announced the summit plans Oct. 9, two days after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with Kim in Pyongyang. This was Pompeo’s second meeting with the North Korean leader to push negotiations forward.

In a joint statement, Kim invited international inspectors to the Punggye-ri nuclear weapons test site to confirm that “it has been irrevocably dismantled,” the State Department said. The North Korean government destroyed tunnels at the facility in May. A complete list of all of the North’s nuclear facilities and infrastructure inspected in 2018 by representatives of the United Nations Security Council was among disarmament measures agreed to by the two leaders.

This approach is supported by South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in, who has said he is willing to dismantle its main facility for producing nuclear fuel at Yongbyon if Washington also takes steps that would make it easier for Pyongyang to sign a peace treaty with the U.S. rulers turned much of Korea into a “symbolic statement” declaring the newly formed Korean People’s Republic. Instead, he declared that the U.S. Army was the sole government in the South. During the occupation thousands of workers, peasants and revolutionary political activists were arrested, and thousands killed.

The U.S. Army Military Government directly ruled the South until 1948, when it installed the dictatorial regime headed by Syngman Rhee. He remained in control until 1960, when he was forced out by a mass uprising of workers and youth.

The new government in the North, meanwhile, put in place radical reforms in the interest of working people, including a thoroughgoing land reform, expropriation of many capitalist businesses, punishment of Koreans who collaborated with the Japanese occupation, and the passage of laws guaranteeing formal equality for women.

Washington’s “nuclear umbrella” over South Korea on the occasion of Moscow, Washington divided Korea in half, against the will of the incoming Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Although Washington agreed to an immediate sign a peace treaty,” wrote Steve Clark noted that the Socialist Workers Party welcomes “every step since the Singapore summit in June toward an agreement between the DPRK and the US government ensuring a Korea free of nuclear weapons of any origin.”

Progress toward decreasing tensions across the border between North and South, talks being held about large-scale joint industrial and rail development projects, and the reinstitution of reunion programs for families separated since the war point toward the potential for reunification of the country.

"For a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula!” Clark concluded. “Korea is one!”

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: New Mexico: SWP: ‘US must sign peace treaty’
Continued from front page

We face a challenge. Only 6.5 percent of work-
ers at private companies belong to a union.

Fearing a little more confidence with the cyc-
lical upturn in the capitalist economy, more work-
ers are seeking to join unions, or are fighting, or
striking to improve conditions and wages — like
Uber and other drivers, like thousands of strik-
ing hotel workers who proclaim, “One job should
be worth the same.” But under capitalism today, one
job is often not enough to pay the rent, to feed and
clothe our families.

The SWP candidates encourage workers to or-
ganize solidarity with the hotel workers and all
those who go on strike or are organizing to be in
a union today.

We need a fighting union movement that says,
“We don’t care where you were born, we don’t care
what language you speak, we don’t care about the
color of your skin. Join us! Let’s fight together!”

But we need more than that. We need our own
worker-controlled newspaper.

Our own labor party, based on the unions, would
challenge the Democrats and Republicans not just
in the elections. It would build a fighting alliance
between workers and exploited farmers. It would be
a harbinger of the future fight of the working class to
political and economic power out of the hands of the
capitalist carcass-makers once and for all.

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign!

Continued from front page

What the capitalists are doing to us,” Fruit respond-
ed the question, “is part of what the capitalist class is
doing to us, part of what we’re fighting against. The
other people’s freedom is our freedom.”

“People lost their homes and had to leave the city,”
said one of the workers picketing in front of the Westin Hotel Oct. 12.

Join SWP taking campaign to workers!

Workers need to build their own political party, a labor party

“Militant” censorship

Continued from page 7

to the literature of their choice, they make it hard
for people to read books by SWP leaders. And they
are working to build a new prison system that will
prepare for their life outside prison walls.

Willie Cotton, speaking for the Socialist Workers
Party, outlined the Militant’s fight against censorship in
Florida prisons. “Sometimes they’ve censored ar-
ticles for writing about the fight against censorship,”
Cotton said.

Prisons and the criminal “justice” system aren’t set up
to defend justice. Cotton noted, but to keep work-
ning people in their place. They run you through the
plea bargain system, where over 90 percent of people
who face charges are forced to cop a plea, regardless
of whether they are guilty or not.

As the class struggle outside prison walls heats up,
we will see more attempts to take away constitutional
rights of those behind prison bars, Cotton said.

When the Militant is censored, “We will fight only
for our newspaper or even for subscribers,” Militant
editor John Studer said in the discussion, “but for
all workers behind bars to read the literature of their
choosing, to think for themselves and be part of the
movement to change the world.”

Everyone opposed to the Florida prison system’s vi-
oblations of the Bill of Rights can help out with this fight
by writing a letter, and getting unions, church groups,
community organizations, co-workers and others to
do likewise, opposing censorship of the Militant.

Send letters to Dean Peterson, Library Services Ad-
imistrator, Florida Department of Corrections, Attn:
Librarians, P.O. Box 1750, Tallahassee, FL 32309-1750.

Please send a copy and a contribution to continue this battle to
the Militant.

“Militant” censorship

Continued from page 7

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